

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### American Greetings Corp.

#### Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions

#### Training Kicks Off American Greetings' Lean Journey

**Client Profile:**

American Greetings Corporation is a manufacturer of greeting cards. It's Just In Time Lines (JITL) team, based in Osceola, Arkansas, has approximately 500 employee members.

**Situation:**

American Greetings Corporation decided to pursue a lean manufacturing strategy for the JITL division. The company sent two key team members to a value stream mapping seminar conducted by the Arkansas Manufacturing Extension Network (the Network), a NIST MEP network affiliate, in September 2002. Impressed by this seminar, American Greetings asked the Network to facilitate the company's lean initiative.

**Solution:**

The Network conducted its Principles of Lean Manufacturing (Lean 101) seminar for specific groups of American Greetings employees. Over the next six months, the Network taught 70 employees the concepts and techniques of lean. The employees have since applied their knowledge on the shop floor to improve process efficiency.

**Results:**

Implemented flow manufacturing.

Reduced lead times by several days.

Reduced work-in-process.

Increased on-time performance.

Anticipating million-dollar impacts as lean projects continue to generate results.

**Testimonial:**

"The Arkansas Manufacturing Extension Network has provided excellent service. We have been very pleased with the reception from our associates to the Lean 101 training. The combination of hands-on simulation and classroom instruction provides a unique insight and understanding to our associates into lean principles. "

Lisa Golden, Divisional IS Consultant

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